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selecting a set of names that are stored in the database, wherein the selection is based on a culture-relevant key-indexing strategy; and using an algorithm tailored according to the selected search strategy to evaluate which of the selected names match the proper name, wherein the search strategy corresponds to matching pronunciation equivalent phonetic alphabet representations of each of the inputted proper name to pronunciation equivalent phonetic alphabet representations of the selected set of names stored in the database.

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20. (New) A computerized method of comparing proper names, comprising the steps of:

obtaining text data representing a first proper name that designates an entity and a second proper name, wherein the first proper name corresponds to an input name requiring comparison with other proper names; converting the text data representing said first and second names to first and second pronunciation equivalent phonetic alphabet representations, equivalent to at least two or more respective portions of said first and second names; comparing said first and second pronunciation equivalent phonetic alphabet representations corresponding to two or more respective portions of said first and second names to determine a likelihood that said second name also designates the entity; and producing a signal indicating said likelihood that said second name designates the entity.